

719. Divergence between convictions and conduct. This means that faith in Christian doctrine was gone, but that the ecclesiastical system was a tolerated humbug which served many interests. Burckhardt quotes¹ a passage from Guicciardini in which the latter says that he had held positions under many popes, which compelled him to wish for their greatness, on account of his own advantage. Otherwise he would have loved Martin Luther, not in order to escape the restraints of the current church doctrine, but in order to see the corrupt crew brought to order, so that they must have learned to live either without power or without vices. Thus the conduct of men was separated from their most serious convictions by considerations of interest and expediency, and a moral inconsistency was developed in character. Churches were built and foundations were multiplied, so that the masses seemed more zealous than the popes, but at the beginning of the sixteenth century there were bitter complaints of the decline of worship and the neglect of the churches.² We have all the phenomena of a grand breaking up of old mores and the beginning of new ones. "It required the unbelief of the fifteenth century to give free rein to the rising commercial energies, and the craving for material improvement, that paved the way for the overthrow of ascetic sacerdotalism."³ The new class of burghers with capital produced a new idea of liberty to be set against the feudal idea of liberty of nobles and ecclesiastics, and that new class became the founders of the modern state.

720. Classical learning a fad. Whatever may have been the origin of the zeal for classical study of the late Middle Ages, it was a remarkable example of a fad which became

the fashion
and very strongly influenced the mores. It was
strengthened
by the revolt against the authority of the
church, and the
humanism which it produced took the place of the
mental stock
which the church had offered. " Humanism
effected the eman-
cipation of intellect by culture. It called attention
to the beauty
and delightfulness of nature, restored man to a
sense of his
dignity, and freed him from theological authority.
But in Italy,

¹ Burckhardt, *Renaissance*, 465.

² *Ibid.** 490.

³ Lea, *Sacerd. Celibacy*, 364.